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JAN 26 2007

Docket No.: SANZ-254

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

It is respectfully submitted that the amendments to the specification are in accordance with the Examiner's request.

It is believed that the objection to claim 16 has been overcome by the amendment thereto.

Claims 11-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) for allegedly being unpatentable over the combination of Love and Shinohara. Applicants respectfully traverse.

The presently claimed invention recites to the following features (item numbers included for reference):

- a) method for the operation of an in-line coating installation
- b) with an inward transfer chamber (2)
- c) with an adjoining buffer chamber (21)
- d) with a process chamber (3) adjoining thereon
- e) with a further buffer chamber (22) adjoining it and
- f) an outward transfer chamber (4) adjoining it
- g) with gates (61, 64, 65, 62) provided between the chambers, which can be opened and closed
- h) where the inward transfer chamber (2), the buffer chamber (21, 22) and the outward transfer chamber 94) are developed as identical modules and for receiving substrates up to a specified maximum size
- i) for the coating of substrates (55), which are greater than the modules

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j) the gate (61) between the inward transfer chamber (2) and the buffer chamber (21)
k) as well as the gate (62) between the buffer chamber (22) and the outward transfer chamber (4)

l) are opened and the pressure conditions of the buffer chambers (21,22) and of the inward transfer (2) or outward transfer chamber (4) are adapted to one another.

Love discloses a method for the operation of an inline coating installed (see e.g., claim 10), an inward transfer chamber (entrance chamber 30) as well as an outward transfer chamber (exit chamber 32).

It is not certain, however, whether Love discloses two buffer chambers. Such buffer chambers are not seen, rather working chamber 16 includes a coating part 70 and separating parts 72, 74. These parts 70, 72, 74 are not separate buffer chambers. Thus, items c) and e) set forth above are not disclosed by Love.

Love discloses gates 92, 84, 36, 38 between the parts 70, 72, 74 and between a part and the entrance chamber 30 and between another part and the exit chamber 32. Gate 36 is located at the left end (see Fig. 3), whereas gate 38 is located at the right end (see Fig. 6). Gate 84 is shown in Fig. 1 right hand side, whereas gate 92 should be shown in Fig. 3 at the wall 90. Numeral 92 cannot be found in the drawings, however, numeral 110 in Fig. 1 also identifies this gate. The gates 92, 84, 36, 38 of Love cannot be compared with the gates of the present invention because Love does not disclose buffer chambers. Therefore, feature g) is also not disclosed by Love.

The Examiner admits that Love does not disclose that the chambers are, except the working chamber, all of the same size, so feature h) is also not disclosed by Love.

Love also fails to disclose a substrate larger than the transfer chamber or buffer chamber.

Features j) through l) are also not disclosed by Love.

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As a result, features c), e), g), h), i), j), h) and l) are not taught or suggested by Love. Love also fails to teach or suggest that substrates can be coated which are larger than the two chambers in front of and behind the working chamber.

Shinohara discloses a substrate treatment apparatus including substrate treating chambers 301 and 303 and a buffer chamber 302 having an exhaust system 306b. Connecting tubes 304a and 304b are provided between the substrate treatment chambers and the buffer chamber. The apparatus disclosed by Shinohara is a batch apparatus, which is different from that of the present invention.

According to the examiner, Shinohara teaches transfer chambers 407 and 410 that are of the same size of buffer chambers 408a and 408b with a substrate large enough to require the transfer and buffer chambers to be open to one another in order to continuously coat a larger substrate.

Paragraphs [0004] – [0005] cited by the Examiner do not disclose transfer chambers nor buffer chambers. Accordingly, their size cannot be disclosed by these paragraphs.

Fig. 4 shows loading and unloading chambers 407 and 410 which are not transfer chambers according to the present invention. Furthermore, buffer chambers 408a to 408d have nothing in common with the buffer chambers of the present invention.

Shinohara clearly does not disclose inward transfer chambers.

As can be understood from Fig. 4, there is no gate which can be opened for introducing glass into the loading chamber 407, and there is no gate between the loading chamber 407 and the buffer chamber 408a.

In addition, Fig. 6 of Shinohara shows an apparatus by which flat substrates can be treated, but gates which can be opened and closed are not disclosed.

Even if one assumed for the sake of argument that 408a to 408d are buffer chambers in accordance with the present invention, Shinohara still does not disclose feature f), because there is no outward transfer chamber adjoining the buffer chamber 408b. Moreover, features g) to l) are also not disclosed by Shinohara.

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Since features g) to l) are not disclosed by Love either, the combination of Love with Shinohara can not lead to the subject of the presently claimed invention.

Furthermore, one would not be led to a combination of the two apparatuses because the apparatuses are of different species, as an inline apparatus would not likely be combined with a batch apparatus.

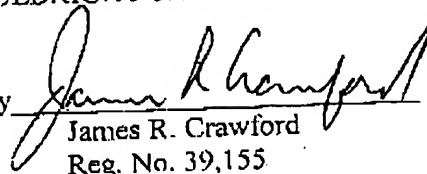
In view of the foregoing, allowance is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in the fees filed, asserted to be filed or which should have been filed herewith (or with any paper hereafter filed in this application by this firm) to our Deposit Account No. 50-0624, under Order No. NY-SANZ-254-US. A duplicate copy of this paper is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

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Enclosures